Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project & Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR) in 56 Inter State catchments of 27 States in the country including catchments of Bihar, Orissa and Maharashtra States to minimize soil erosion, land degradation and to reduce flood peaks and volume of runoff. Under this Programme, suitable soil and water conservation measures are adopted and all types of land *viz.* agricultural land, forest land and wastelands are treated.

The Ministry of Water Resources is also implementing a State Sector Scheme on "Flood Management Programme" under which central assistance is provided to the State Governments for river management, flood control, anti erosion work, anti sea-erosion work, drainage development, flood proofing, flood prone area development programme, restoration of damaged flood management work etc.

(c) to (e) Specified proposals from the State Governments of Bihar, Orissa and Maharashtra seeking central assistance for restoration of farming land of flood affected areas have not been received. However, in the wake of recent floods in Bihar, the State Government has projected a requirement of Rs.827.66 crores for rehabilitation of Agriculture Sector including restoration of farm land as per details given below:

S. No.	Activity/item of Work	Amount (crore)
1.	Soil testing	1.50
2.	Cost of de-siltation of agricultural land	450.00
3.	Crop seed distribution	10.07
4.	Fruit plant/seed distribution	27.49
5.	Vegetable seed distribution	177.58
6.	Agricultural implements distribution	63.56
7.	Field Demonstration & Training	40.56
8.	Restoration of farm infrastructure	6.90
9.	Agricultural input subsidy	50.00
	TOTAL	827.66

A High Level Central Team of the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has visited Bihar and advised the State Government about suitable agricultural crops/activities and agricultural inputs *i.e.* appropriate crop varieties and seeds.

Welfare policy on heavy losses to farmers due to cold wave

†785. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any welfare policy on heavy losses to farmers due to cold wave and frost in Rajasthan in the past; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Financing of relief expenditure in the wake of natural calamities in the country is carried out in accordance with the recommendations of Finance Commission, from time to time. There are two schemes for providing assistance towards immediate relief in the wake of natural calamities *viz.* Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF). Damage to crops due to frost / cold wave is not one of the natural calamities admissible for assistance from CRF/NCCF.

Potential of tuna fish in Lakshadweep

786. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a lot of potential of tuna fish in and around Lakshadweep;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry has decided to purchase ships and equipments specialized in catching tuna fish in the area; and

(c) if so, how far training and other facilities have been given to the residents of Lakshadweep to increase their catch of tuna fish?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir. The estimated tuna potential in Lakshadweep is about 50,000 metric tonnes.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Lakshadweep Administration has proposed to acquire a mother vessel and introduce gillnetter cum longliners, mechanized tuna pole and line fishing boats, fish aggregating devices etc. in order to exploit the rich tuna fish resources in the island waters.

(c) Necessary training to the fishermen of Lakshadweep islands to exploit tuna fish resources is provided through Fishery Survey of India (FSI) and other fishery related institutions.

Loss of crops due to spurious pesticides

787. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the spurious pesticides being manufactured and sold in the market, destroying crops worth Rs. 6000 crore a year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to detect the source of such spurious pesticides and punish them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Government has received representations from the pesticide industry regarding manufacture and sale of spurious pesticides in the market. A news item published in the newspaper Business Standard dated 22.9.2008 has mentioned annual crop loss worth Rs.6,000 crore due to spurious pesticides.